

August 3, 2007

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper  
513 Hart Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Carper:

I write on behalf of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) to respectfully request that you co-sponsor the Heroes at Home Act of 2007 (S. 1065). The proposed legislation would improve services and supports for Armed Services personnel with TBI and their families, and represents a critical move forward in meeting the rehabilitation and emotional adjustment needs of traumatic brain injury (TBI) survivors of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF).

This legislation recognizes the critical role played by family caregivers in facilitating recovery from brain injury, and addresses the pressing need to increase support for these caregivers by establishing a Traumatic Brain Injury Family Personal Caregiver Attendant Training and Certification Program. This program would train and certify family caregivers of returning soldiers with TBI as personal care attendants, enabling them to provide quality care to their loved ones at home and at the same time qualify for compensation from the VA.

The "Heroes at Home Act of 2007" will also take important steps to establish a protocol for the assessment and documentation of cognitive functioning of each member of the Armed Forces both before and after deployment, including appropriate mechanisms to permit the differential diagnosis of TBI and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in returning service members. There is a great need for improved diagnostic capabilities in detecting the occurrence of one or, as frequently occurs, the co-existence of both conditions.

This legislation was introduced by Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY) on March 29, 2007 and is supported by the Brain Injury Association of America, Wounded Warrior Project, American Legion, National Military Families Association, Military Officers Association of America, Gold Star Mothers and Lee Woodruff, TBI caregiver and co-author with husband Bob Woodruff of New York Times bestseller *In An Instant*.

SCPD endorses S. 1065 and encourages you to co-sponsor the “Heroes at Home Act of 2007” to proactively address the unanticipated high incidence of traumatic brain injuries among America’s brave soldiers returning from combat.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniese McMullin-Powell, Chairperson  
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

S:bic/heroes at home act 2007